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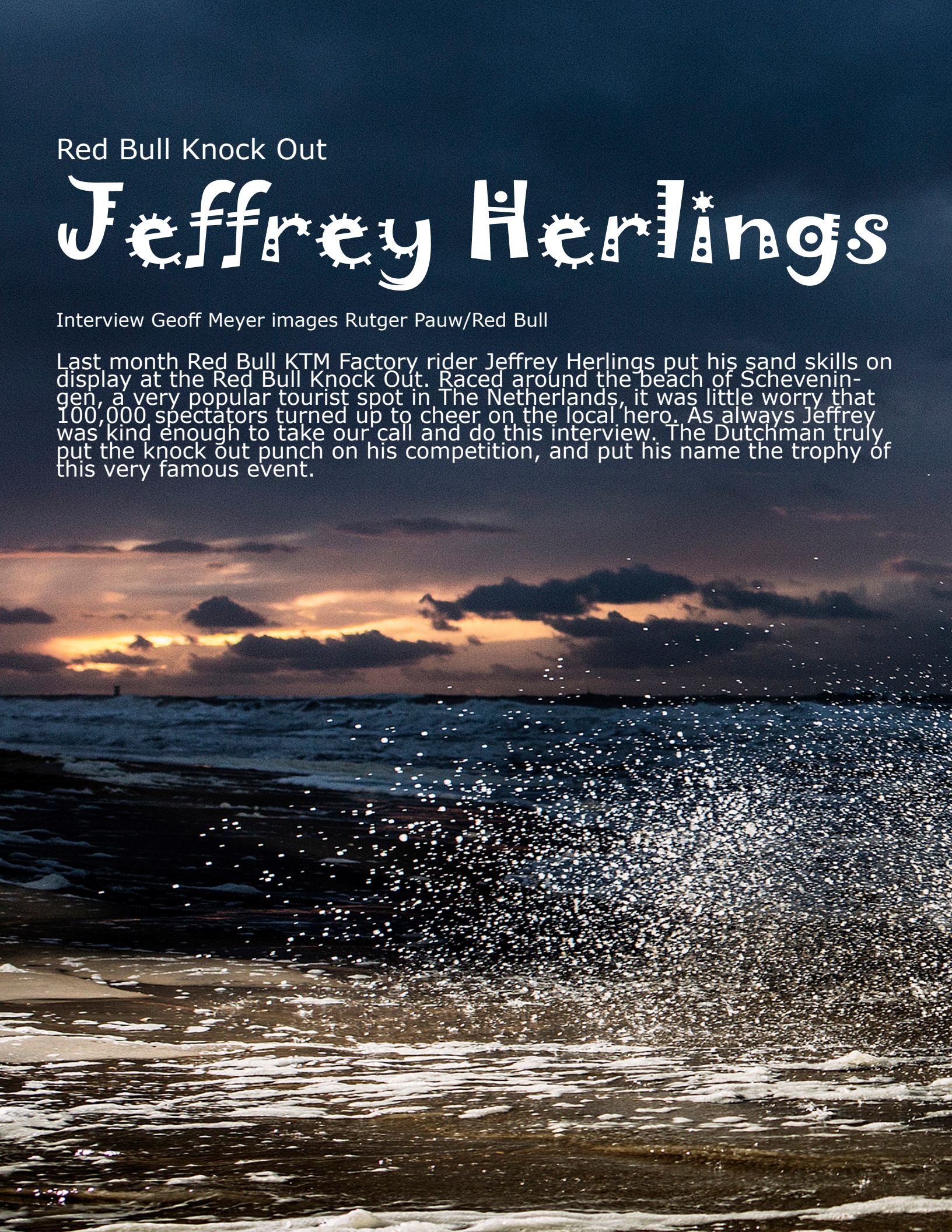
Red Bull Knock Out

Jeffrey Herlings

Interview Geoff Meyer images Rutger Pauw/Red Bull

Last month Red Bull KTM Factory rider Jeffrey Herlings put his sand skills on display at the Red Bull Knock Out. Raced around the beach of Scheveningen, a very popular tourist spot in The Netherlands, it was little worry that 100,000 spectators turned up to cheer on the local hero. As always Jeffrey was kind enough to take our call and do this interview. The Dutchman truly put the knock out punch on his competition, and put his name the trophy of this very famous event.



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Motocross Illustrated: Jeffrey, first tell me, that must have been amazing. Can you tell me how it felt?

Herlings: It been pretty amazing, I was looking forward to it a long time, and we put in a lot of preparation and time putting in, straight after the SMX. We didn't have so much time bike wise, but it turned out well, we won the qualification heat and then the main final, so it went well, it was a good day.

Motocross Illustrated: It seemed a little like a boxing match, where if you knock somebody out early in all your fights, then you suddenly have to go 12 rounds. However you stamina seemed pretty good.

Herlings: I did feel good, in the final I had some cramps, but that was because we had a half final for maybe an hour and a half, then the final for like two hours, I think it was something different for my body. I felt good, just the cramps, but everything else went really well. I felt good when I finished the race. Sunday morning I was a bit stiff, but that is how it goes.

Motocross Illustrated: Watching you go down the straight, with your back wheel swapping around, for somebody like me, who isn't a thrill seeker and doesn't like high speeds, it looked really scary. How was it for you?

Herlings: It was, pretty gnarly, I mean you go down that straight around 150 kl or 160 kl, something like that, and it was pretty crazy with the rear wheel, but plenty of riders had that issue, I think it was kind of normal. It was pretty impressive.

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Motocross Illustrated: Did you have any hairy moment?

Herlings: You know, I was lucky, it was really safe. For the half final and then the final, it was like three and a half hours on the bike, or something like that. Actually I was surprised I didn't get in touch with another rider, I didn't crash. Being on a track, like in the half final, with around 1000 riders, all on different speeds, it was pretty sketchy. I all turned out well.

Motocross Illustrated: Did anything surprise? I mean watching you come through on that first lap and passing guys and your speed was like five times faster than some guys. You obviously love speed, was it a buzz?

Herlings: When you are lapping guys so quickly and they are so many minutes a lap slower, it is pretty sketchy. You catch them so quick, and on the track, not the start straight, but just around the track, you are doing like 100kl an hour and their speed is slow, so you can't get too close, because id they swap across in front of you, it's not going to end well. So you really need to be good at looking forward and always expect the unexpected.

Motocross Illustrated: It looked like a really fantastic event. How was it being there?

Herlings: It was an impressive event, so different to a normal motocross race. I mean so many people (around 100,000) along the track, and the track was so rough. Running along the beach, it was pretty crazy, but a really cool event.

Motocross Illustrated: You have always been popular

in Holland, but it seems like that popularity is just growing and growing. Could you feel that on the weekend?

Herlings: Yes, definitely. I try and be good for the fans and a good ambassador for the sport and for KTM. Through the years, with experience, people change and I have changed and I think it's important to be good with the fans. I enjoy the racing, but I also enjoy the fans and without those fans who are sticking with me, I wouldn't be able to live my dreams. I am very thankful to be in the position I am in currently.

Motocross Illustrated: Talking about fans, and obviously social media is a big part of the relationship between fans and riders. What do you make of the social media thing between Ken Roczen and David Pingree? Did you even see it?

Herlings: I did see something about it. I don't know what is going on there. Obviously you always have people for you or against you and I think you shouldn't let negative energy from the fans or whoever take it over. I always try and stay away from the negative comments. The smart thing is not to comment, because no matter who you are, and what you do, some people will like you and some won't, and you shouldn't let the negative comments take over.

Rutger Pauw images

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DAKAR RALLY

Sebas Romero images

The route of the 2017 Dakar preserves rally-raid traditions, with a physical challenge that will push the competitors into the world of extreme endurance: 7 selective sections will be over 400 kilometres with one of more than 500 kilometres. The rally will be spent 6 days at more than 3,000 metres above sea level. The balance of difficulties can be illustrated by a double upward trend: the level of difficulty will increase just until the rest day, then a second increase in power will be necessary, to reach one's ideal level for the "Super Belén". Nothing will be decided until the very last special stage at Río Cuarto".

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It won’t be the distance that will preoccupy the competitors, but rather the tension that will accompany the opening days of competition. Everyone will have to be aware that an error on the technical tracks and even the trial-style sections early on could be costly. The tactic for the following day’s starting positions will also have its importance for the top contenders.

The regulars believe they know Argentina, but they have yet to encounter the “Chaco”! In this region chalk-full of history for connoisseurs of world rally competition (Transchaco, etc.), patience and a cool head will be invaluable assets, especially when it comes to the dust. Unless, of course, it turns to mud!

The rise in temperature and altitude will accompany a drastic change of scenery. With the first off-road sections, the riders and crews will head straight to the business at hand. The first real test in terms of endurance will also call for vigilance and lucidity when crossing the Rios. On the other hand, the trucks will be spared this final difficulty.

At around 3,500 metres, the Dakar will reach “a cruising altitude” of which competitors will have to navigate for six days. There are few that have already seen dunes at this altitude that will require an expert climbing technique. The co-drivers will have no time to relax, with a number of direction changes in the Bolivian section of the special stage.

The Dakar will take up residence on the Bolivian Altiplano. While the organisms will become acclimated, fatigue will set in. In this context, the large variety of terrain makes

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this stage one of the most demanding. In the purest Dakar spirit the density of the day will be characterized by the two dune sectors that will complicate the final kilometres of the special stage.

Everyone will have the chance to take a photo in front of Lake Titicaca! The dunes to overcome early in the special stage will be just one of the challenges of this long day. The fastest will complete there running in daylight but for many, headlamps will be invaluable. Reaching the rest day in the Bolivian capital will be considered a success in itself.

The rally begins its return trip by heading towards what has become one of its regular stomping grounds since 2014. The Uyuni casern, which is well known to the raiders, will once again be transformed into a bivouac for a day. For this first part of the marathon stage, which will include very long sections of sandy tracks, the service park will be open to all vehicles, except for those entered in the assistance category.

The Dakar will leave the Altplano for an off-road special stage in its first half, where the crossing of fords will follow the dune sectors. The race has often set up camp in Salta, but never has a special stage been contested in the region where the battle for the general classification will be played out in new canyons to be admired with a marriage of spectacular colours.

Nearly 1,000 kilometres to cover during the day, including a small half in the special stage with 98% off-road for this timed section. This will be the toughest test for the navigators, who will play a

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decisive role. The verdict of this day could mark a turning point in the conquest for the titles.

The arms, shoulders and legs of the riders will be put to a rude test, especially during the long "trial' section that will be the key moment early in the day. The special stage will become a lot more rolling as it nears its end, but the navigation subtleties will impede maximum attacks. Errors will be penalized not in seconds but in minutes.

The San Juan dunes, which will come in the first 50 kilometres of the special stage will be the final to surf on the 2017 Dakar. Those who best handle sliding and the racing line will be right at home on the WRC like tracks of the Córdoba region. Everyone knows that a surprise can come at any moment.

They took on the adventure, and will now become heroes. The 64 final kilometres of the selective section will pose nary a problem… you just have to go the distance, before enjoying an arrival of the special stage placed in the heart of the bivouac. At the end of a long liaison section, the podium ceremony in Buenos Aires will be conducted in front of the Argentine Automobile Club (ACA).

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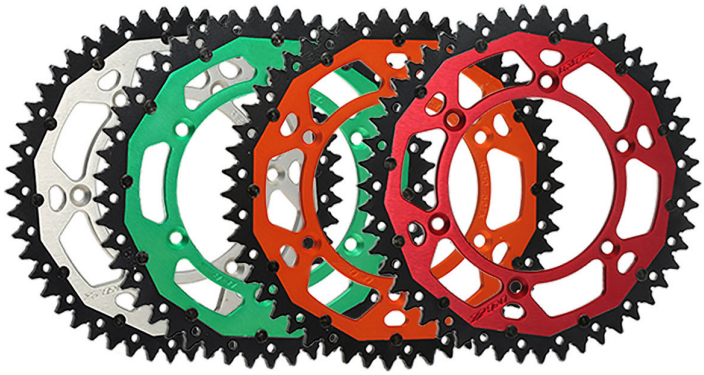

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HOME WIN

Story Pascal Haudiqurt images Ray Archer

Just one year after winning the Motocross of Nations in Ernée with the French team, Marvin Musquin did a strong come back in France as he dominates the first night of the Paris Lille Supercross. The factory KTM rider won all the races that he entered, and beats in the main event Justin Barcia and Malcom Stewart. The stadium in Lille was full for this first night, and the French public was cheering all night long Marvin Musquin who was doing his first appearance there. Marvin beat Malcom Stewart in the qualifying race, and repeat this performance later when he dominates the super pole session, followed again by Malcom.

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The Frenchman had to wait the main event to see Justin Barcia next to him behind the same gate; Justin was the winner of the other qualifying race, after a very nice fight with Cedric Soubeyras who was 'on fire' tonight! In the main event Marvin got the holeshot and made a gap as Justin was only third at the start; when he came second he try to join Marvin but the Frenchie was too strong and crossed the finish line five seconds ahead of the JGR Suzuki rider, who finished second while Malcom Stewart beats Soubeyras for the last step of the podium.

In the SX2 class no surprise as Florent Richier the leader of the SX Tour won the main event; winner of his qualifying race, Richier had to wait thirteen laps to join and pass Thomas Do who got the holeshot. Long time leader of the race Do finish second, followed by Yannis Irsuti who came back from his seventh position at the start.

As usual the stadium was very noisy for the FMX shows; Swedish Daniel Bodin was for the first time riding a snowmobile in a French event, and surprised everyone when he did the back flip with his heavy machine! Everyone will be of course back in the stadium on Sunday morning for the second and final day of the event. In the team's classification, Team USA (10 points) is leading just one point ahead of Team France.

Marvin Musquin: "I knew that the start would be important, and it was great to get the holeshot. The track was technical and rough for the main event, on some places you had to be careful but I didn't do any mistake and had a good rhythm during all the race. I'm very happy to win here, the public was so great and of course I will try to get another win on Sunday."

Results SX1 : 1.Musquin (FRA, KTM) ; 2.Barcia (USA, Suzuki) ; 3.Stewart (USA, Honda) ; 4.Soubeyras (FRA, Suzuki) ; 5.Craig (USA, Honda) ; 6.Ramette (FRA, Suzuki) ; 7.Tixier (FRA, Kawasaki) ; 8.Coulon (FRA, Suzuki) ; 9.Izoird (FRA, Honda) ; 10.Mallet (FRA, Honda) ; 11.Febvre (FRA, Yamaha) ; 12.Searle (GBR, Kawasaki) ; 13.Escoffier (FRA, Husqvarna) ; 14.Boog (FRA, Kawasaki) ; 15.Desprey (FRA, Kawasaki) ; 16.Teillet (FRA, Honda)

Results SX2 : 1.Richier (Suzuki) ; 2.Do (Honda) ; 3.Irsuti (Yamaha) ; 4.Bourdon (Husqvarna) ; 5.Le Hir (Honda) ; 6.Barcelo (Suzuki) ; 7.Lozzi (Kawasaki) ; 8.Kappel (KTM) ; 9.Imbert (KTM) ; 10.Aubin (Suzuki) ; 11.Hsu (ALL, Husqvarna) ; 12.Surrat (USA, Kawasaki) ; 13.Fonvieille (Yamaha) ; 14.Marrone (Suzuki) ; 15.Nicholls (GBR, Husqvarna) ; 16.Houzet (KTM)

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A Year To Remember

Story Geoff Meyer images KTM

It's been a very successful season for the Red Bull KTM Factory efforts. Be it in America, Europe, Africa, on supercross, motocross, enduro, rally, moto3 or even MotoGP, the success and participation has been what we have come to expect from this very stroung Austrian company. We caught up with KTM Sports Director, Pit Beirer and asked him about the sensational 2016, and where the company is going in 2017.

Motocross Illustrated: Pit, it's been a big year for KTM, victories in so many different categories, from Supercross, Motocross, Enduro, Rally, Moto3, MotoGP. Is there a highlight for you?

Beirer: There are man activities at KTM for highlights. What should I tell you now. There were a few. Supercross title with Ryan Dungey, MX2 title for Jeffrey Herlings and entering into MotoGP are the three highlights for me.

Motocross Illustrated: KTM entered into MotoGP this year, and I can imagine MotoGP is a class that is really tough to move forward in. How quickly do you think that is possible?

Beirer: For me, it wasn't a surprise or something negative so far, because I knew the challenge we are looking at. All the motorsport department, the board of directors, we are all realistic, and we are entering a new world, where all the other factories are pushing so much and so crazy, that you can't just pass them and skip 20 years or experience in that class. It's a huge effort and we are at the bottom of the grid, and we know that, but we also have a strong commitment and we don't want to stay there.

Motocross Illustrated: I am not a massive MotoGP fan, but obviously KTM moving to MotoGP is interesting for the MX fans, but how has the interest been from MotoGP fans and media?

Beirer: That has been pretty overwhelming. The media requests and the interest from the fans, but also just people in the street, or even in my area. They all talk about MotoGP, because it's still from all the motorcycle disciplines, the sport that is seen on television all around the world. So it you enter a class where Valentino Rossi rides, and everyone knows him, then it's important for us. He had a lot more media requests than any other sport we are involved in. It is a very important class to be in, and it doesn't mean our other sports are not important, but interest in MotoGP is very big.

Motocross Illustrated: When you have the amount of success, like the AMA Supercross, the MX2 title, the SMX title, the Moto3 title, and so many more in in Enduro and Rally. Clearly the most successful factory in two wheeled sport. Is it then possible to be disappointed with not winning the MXGP title?

Beirer: Absolutely not, and you remember my words in the past and I repeat them to you again. We are not checking in just for titles, and we can't buy them, and we don't want to buy them. What I want is all disciplines with 100% focus, the best staff, and the best riders together in a team. For my job it's hard to keep track of all the disciplines, but for me it's like a castle, and you need a clear leader and a strong staff. I ask my people to prepare as hard as we can and be prepared for the championship. That is what I push for, and I would be mad if we didn't give it 100%. But if other guys beat us because they are better, or if we have bad luck with injuries, that isn't disappointment, that is just

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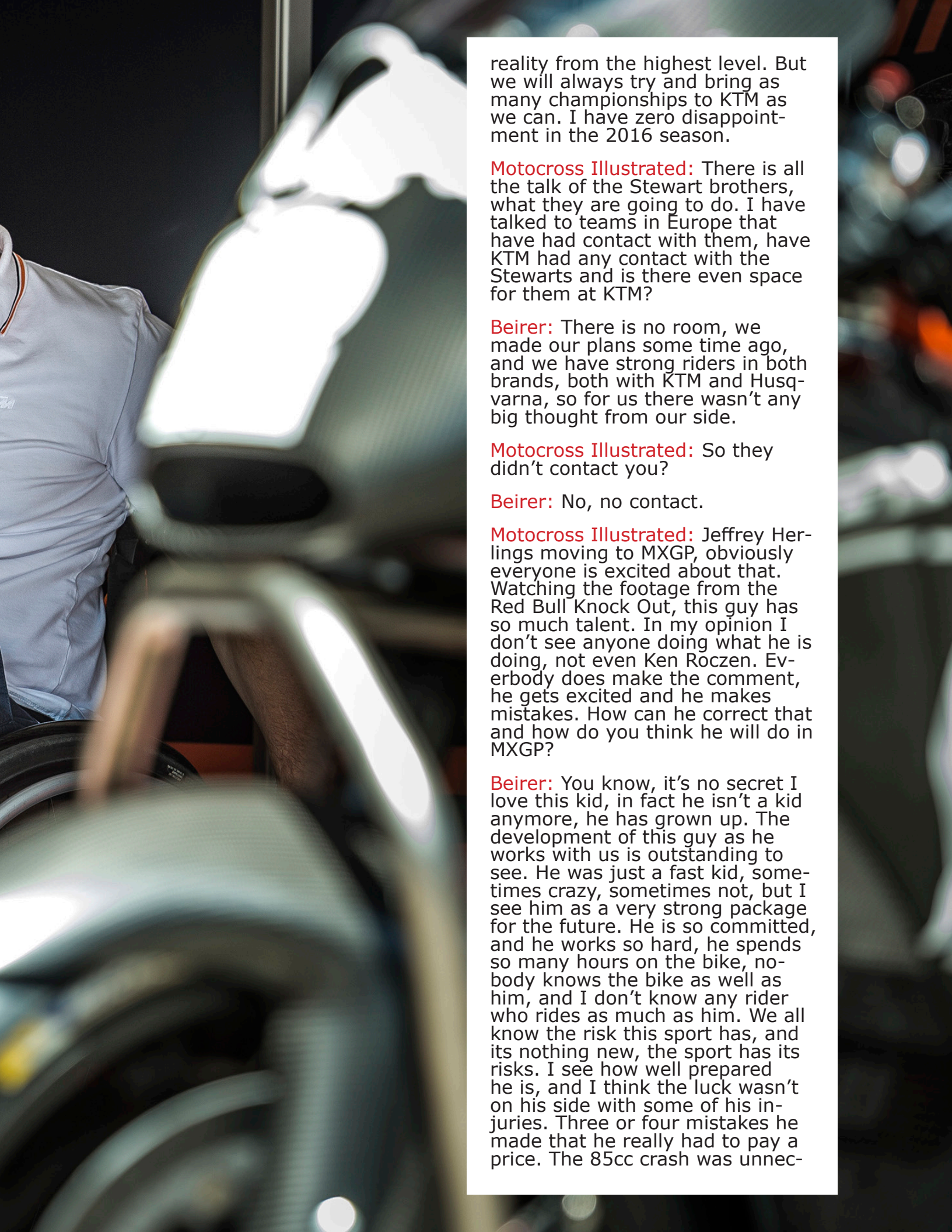

reality from the highest level. But we will always try and bring as many championships to KTM as we can. I have zero disappointment in the 2016 season.

Motocross Illustrated: There is all the talk of the Stewart brothers, what they are going to do. I have talked to teams in Europe that have had contact with them, have KTM had any contact with the Stewarts and is there even space for them at KTM?

Beirer: There is no room, we made our plans some time ago, and we have strong riders in both brands, both with KTM and Husqvarna, so for us there wasn't any big thought from our side.

Motocross Illustrated: So they didn't contact you?

Beirer: No, no contact.

Motocross Illustrated: Jeffrey Herlings moving to MXGP, obviously everyone is excited about that. Watching the footage from the Red Bull Knock Out, this guy has so much talent. In my opinion I don't see anyone doing what he is doing, not even Ken Roczen. Everbody does make the comment, he gets excited and he makes mistakes. How can he correct that and how do you think he will do in MXGP?

Beirer: You know, it's no secret I love this kid, in fact he isn't a kid anymore, he has grown up. The development of this guy as he works with us is outstanding to see. He was just a fast kid, sometimes crazy, sometimes not, but I see him as a very strong package for the future. He is so committed, and he works so hard, he spends so many hours on the bike, nobody knows the bike as well as him, and I don't know any rider who rides as much as him. We all know the risk this sport has, and its nothing new, the sport has its risks. I see how well prepared he is, and I think the luck wasn't on his side with some of his injuries. Three or four mistakes he made that he really had to pay a price. The 85cc crash was unnec-

essary, was nothing to do with mistakes on his factory bike. I think this year, the win in MX2, that gave him the perfect platform for MXGP. I think the win this year gave him confidence and peace inside that the job is done in MX2, and he can move to the next class. I want to touch wood and hope all my riders stay healthy and can compete for the championships in 2017.

Motocross Illustrated: What about Antonio Cairoli. Two years of injuries, and no championship, getting older. Obviously you are KTM and hope for success for him.

Beirer: He is at an age where every year, you have to decide if you can do it at the top level, or if it's time to stop, all sportsmen of his calibre have to do. He is really committed to not give up, and he is highly motivated to show he is a winning rider. I am 100% behind him, and feel he can come back. It is also interesting for us to see if the wild, strong young boy, will beat the experience, the speed and the ability of an Antonio Cairoli. We still believe in Antonio, and he will give a hard time to the competition in 2017, I am sure.

Motocross Illustrated: Of course there are many riders in the MXGP class that can win?

Beirer: I want to say there isn't just Jeffrey and Antonio, because the competition is so tough and I think it will see many different winners and with many different winners. That might help Antonio, and I am really looking forward to this 2017 MXGP season.

Motocross Illustrated: And the calendar?

Beirer: For me, I don't spend too much time on the calendar. It is a world championship and if we do different countries I am happy to travel around. I see a very interesting and international calendar in front of us. We don't waste too much time on the calendar.

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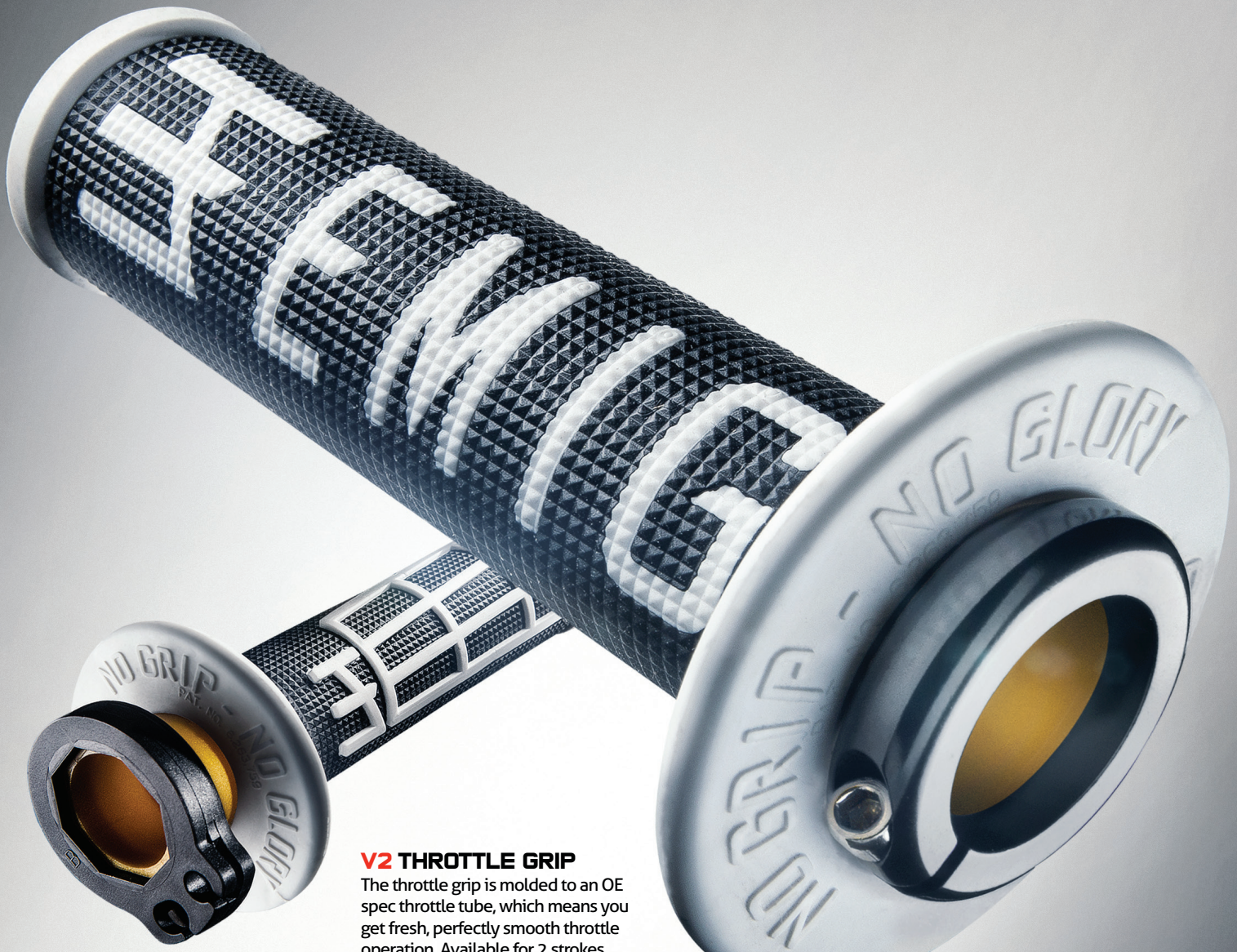

V2 THROTTLE GRIP
The throttle grip is molded to an OE spec throttle tube, which means you get fresh, perfectly smooth throttle operation. Available for 2 strokes and 4 strokes, with multiple throttle cams included.

V2 LOCK-ON SYSTEM
A locking collar secures the clutch side grip to the handlebars. This eliminates the need for glue and wires, and makes it possible to change grips between motos...even if you just want to try a new colour.

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It's not often new technology replaces a conventional standard. The EMIG V2 LOCK–ON GRIP SYSTEM by ODI allows you to change grips in minutes with a 100% slip-free guarantee. Tested and proven by Jeff Emig, the V2 delivers pro-level feel, performance and style.

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450 SX-F Factory Edition

The 450 SX-F FACTORY EDITION has led Ryan Dungey to a successful racing campaign for the last two seasons as he claimed back-to-back AMA Supercross Championships in 2015-'16 and the 2015 AMA Pro Motocross Championship. Additionally, as the lightest and best performing bike in its class, there's no question why the 250 SX-F FACTORY EDITION is the bike of choice for the Troy Lee Designs/Red Bull/KTM team. The 2017 FACTORY EDITION models have been proven to be the most READY TO RACE machines in their class.

A compact SOHC engine effectively delivers explosive power to the ground, thanks to traction control, launch control and a two-position map switch. Updated WP AER 48 forks and rear shock elevate the 450 SX-F's already-stellar handling, while a titanium Akrapovic muffler sheds weight. Top it all off with CNC-machined orange anodized triple clamps, D.I.D. DirtStar rims and Red Bull KTM Factory Racing replica graphics and you have a recipe for success at any level of racing.

2017 KTM 450SXF FACTORY EDITION SPECIFICATIONS:

Engine Type: Single Cylinder, 4-Stroke

Displacement: 449.9 cc

Bore/Stroke: 95.0/63.4 mm

Compression Ratio: 12.7.5:1

Starter/Battery: Electric Starter/12V, 2.2 Ah

Transmission: 5 Gears

Fuel System: Keihin EFI, 44 mm Throttle Body

Lubrication: Pressure lubrication with 2 oil pumps

Primary Ratio: 31:76

Final Drive: 13:48

Cooling: Liquid Cooling

Clutch: Wet Multi-Disc DDS-Clutch, Brembo Hydraulics

Ignition: Keihin EMS

Frame: Central Double-Cradle Type 25CrMo4 Steel

Subframe: Aluminum

Handlebar: Neken, Aluminum Ø 28/22 mm

Front Suspension: WP Suspension AER 48 USD Ø 48 mm

Rear Suspension: WP Monoshock 5018 BAVP DCC with Linkage

Suspension Travel Front/Rear: 300 mm/11.81 in; 300 mm/11.81 in

Front/Rear Brakes: Disc Brake 260 mm/10.24 in; 220 mm/8.66 in

Front/Rear Rims: 1.60x 21, 2.15 x 19 D.I.D. DirtStar

Front/Rear Tires: 80/100-21"; 120/90-19" Dunlop GEOMAX MX3S

Chain: 5/8 x 1/4 in

Silencer: Akrapovic Titanium

Steering Head Angle: 26.1º

Triple Clamp Offset: 22 mm

Wheelbase: 1,485 mm ± 10 mm/58.5 ± 0.4 in

Ground Clearance: 370 mm/14.6 in

Seat Height: 960 mm/37.8 in

Tank Capacity: 7 L/1.85 gal

Weight (without fuel): 100.4 kg/221.3 lbs

250 SX-F Factory Edition

The combination of a powerful and torquey engine in a lightweight and agile chassis is the key to its success. A powerful – yet compact – DOHC engine, refined WP AER 48 forks, orange anodized triple clamps, an FMF titanium muffler, launch control and D.I.D. DirtStar rims make for a READY TO RACE machine that has no equal.

Engine Type: Single Cylinder, 4-Stroke

Displacement: 249 cc

Bore/Stroke: 78.0/52.3 mm

Compression Ratio: 14.4:1

Starter/Battery: Electric Starter/12V, 2.2 Ah

Transmission: 5 Gears

Fuel System: Keihin EFI, 44 mm Throttle Body

Lubrication: Pressure lubrication with 2 oil pumps

Primary Ratio: 24:73

Final Drive: 13:50

Cooling: Liquid Cooling

Clutch: Wet Multi-Disc CSS-Clutch, Brembo Hydraulics

Ignition: Keihin EMS

Frame: Central Double-Cradle Type 25CrMo4 Steel

Subframe: Aluminum

Handlebar: Neken, Aluminum Ø 28/22 mm

Front Suspension: WP Suspension AER 48 USD Ø 48 mm

Rear Suspension: WP Monoshock 5018 BAVP DCC with Linkage

Suspension Travel Front/Rear: 300 mm/11.81 in; 300 mm/11.81 in

Front/Rear Brakes: Disc Brake 260 mm/10.24 in; 220 mm/8.66 in

Front/Rear Rims: 1.60x 21, 2.15 x 19 D.I.D. DirtStar

Front/Rear Tires: 80/100-21”; 100/90-19” Dunlop GEOMAX MX3S

Chain: 5/8 x 1/4 in

Silencer: FMF titanium

Steering Head Angle: 26.1º

Triple Clamp Offset: 22 mm

Wheelbase: 1,485 mm ± 10 mm 58.5 ± 0.4 in

Ground Clearance: 370 mm/14.6 in

Seat Height: 960 mm/37.8 in

Tank Capacity: 7 L/1.85 gal

Weight (without fuel): 98.5 kg/217.2 lbs

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- CNC machined from billet aluminium and steel for lightweight and durability
- Lower and lock the front suspension to prevent the front wheel from lifting due to acceleration
- Hinged fork ring eliminates the need to remove the fork leg allowing installation in minutes
- Better starts and improved control
- All mounting hardware included
- Colour anodised for the factory look
- Race tested by leading motocross teams